

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 19 – NO. 44

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

OCTOBER 14, 2021

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Hunt for Funds As Pedestrian Bridge Bids Come in High

By JEFF SINGLETON

Uncertainty filled the air of an emergency meeting of the Montague selectboard, finance committee, and capital improvements committee on Tuesday evening, four days before a special town meeting is scheduled to take place on the grounds of the Franklin County Technical School.

Weather reports predicted a roughly 50% chance of thunderstorms for the event, which had been moved to the outdoor location after a recent spike in COVID-19 cases in Franklin County. And one of the more complex and time-sensitive budget requests on the agenda – a \$200,000 appropriation to provide additional funding for a new pedestrian bridge over the Turners Falls Power Canal – might prove to be insufficient.

According to the meeting materials issued to the selectboard, the pre-bid estimate for the project recently made by the design firm McMahon Associates came in well over the \$2.16 million state Mass-Works grant designated to fund it. The escalation in cost was explained by “changes in the bridge location, [state and federal] requirements, and sinkholes that emerged in the spring of 2021.”

To address these concerns, two important elements of the project were removed, replaced in the category of “add alternates,” and \$200,000 would be requested from town meeting. The latter, contained see **MONTAGUE** page A5

LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

Sympathetic Dog Hearing; New Fire Chief

By GEORGE BRACE

Newly-appointed fire chief Brian Cook appeared at Leverett’s selectboard meeting on Tuesday to touch base with the board, and propose restarting the department’s junior fire-fighter program and increasing the fees for certain permit applications. Both measures were approved. The board also held a dog hearing, among other business.

Cook received permission to restart the town’s junior firefighter program for 16- to 18-year-olds. The chief said the program’s goal was to help with recruitment to Leverett’s department, along with boosting the general pool of potential firefighters.

The new chief also received approval to raise fees on certain fire permits from \$25 to \$50, with the additional revenue to go towards upgrading subscription services the department uses in processing permits. The chief said the new rate was in line with nearby Hampshire County towns, and projected the increase would generate the \$900 needed for the upgrades.

These upgrades, Cook explained, would allow more efficient searching of manuals, some of which are 700 pages long, and streamline permit processing by eliminating the see **LEVERETT** page A4

FAREWELL TO OL’ PATCHY

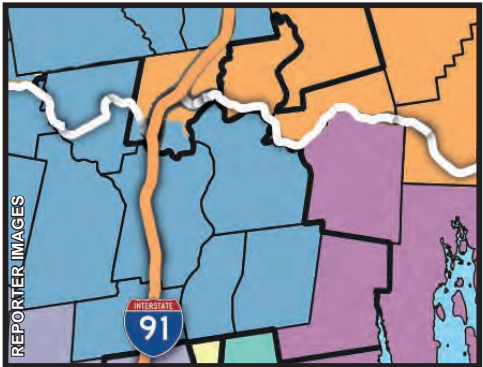
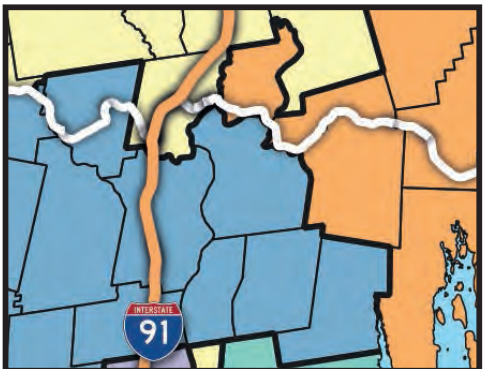


Deck work began in earnest on Tuesday on the General Pierce Bridge. The deck’s deterioration has been a subject of concern for several years, with a series of short-term fixes made before Northern Construction Services’s work started this spring.

ANALYSIS

Proposed District Maps Draw Uproar

By JEFF SINGLETON



Current (top) and proposed (bottom) state House districts. The 2nd Berkshire district (yellow) would leave Franklin County; the 1st Franklin (blue) and 2nd Franklin (orange) would divide Greenfield. Wendell would join the 7th Hampden.

FRANKLIN COUNTY – “It happens every ten years, and everyone gets mad at me,” said Montague town clerk Deb Bourbeau on Wednesday.

Bourbeau was referring to the state legislative process, in response to the decennial US Census, known as “redistricting.” This tweaks, and for some cities and towns radically changes, legislative districts: state House and Senate and US Congressional districts. It also leads to changing precincts within cities and towns, a process which usually precedes and influences the larger process.

Montague residents may not actually have a reason to get mad at Bourbeau this time. She said a preliminary “re-precincting” map from the state, which should be approved by the town, shows “only small changes” in precinct lines, primarily in Precincts 3 through 6. And the preliminary map for legislative districts suggest that Montague could remain in the Senate district represented by Joanne Comerford, and the First Franklin district in the House, represented by Natalie Blais.

Most other cities and towns in Franklin County will also remain within their current districts, although all will find themselves with new neighbors on the periphery. Not so Greenfield, however, which is currently in a “Berkshire” district represented by Paul Mark, but under the new proposal would find itself divided between Blais’s district and the Second Franklin, represented by Susannah Whippes of Athol.

The latter district includes Athol, Orange, and Erving, and it see **DISTRICTS** page A6

High School Sports Week

By MATT ROBINSON

TURNERS FALLS – This week, three Franklin Tech and Turners Falls sports teams came against three powerful foes.

In football, the Tech Eagles fought against the second-best D-VIII team in the state, but the players and their fans never gave up. In field hockey, Turners Falls played almost the entire game in their own end of the field, and did everything they could to keep the score at a respectable 4-0.

And in volleyball, Turners finally came down to earth, losing their first game of the season against the Frontier Red Hawks, the sitting D-III state champions.

Football

Ware 36 – FCTS 6

Last Friday, October 10 the Juggernaut called the Ware Indians rolled into town and defeated the Franklin Tech Football Eagles 36-6. After the game I asked coach Joe Gamache what were the good things he saw. “The kids never gave up,” he immediately responded.

And they didn’t. Even when Ware made long runs, the Tech Boys pursued and made sprinting, touchdown-saving tackles. The fans never gave up, either: even in the fourth quarter, with the game out of reach, the Franklin Tech

see **SPORTS** page A4



Turners Falls High School golf team member Joey Mosca watches his drive on the Hole No. 3 fairway at Thomas Memorial Golf Course as the Thunder hosted Hopkins Academy last Friday.

Buckland Chief Faces Indecent Assault Charge; Quietly Retired

By MIKE JACKSON

BUCKLAND – To little fanfare, after 32 years on the Buckland police department and 30 years as its chief, James Hicks retired last month and was replaced by the department’s other full-time officer, Officer Kurt Gilmore, as acting chief.

The item first appeared on the agenda of the town selectboard, which serves as personnel board and appoints the police chief, on August 24. “The next regularly scheduled Board meeting will occur after Chief Hicks’ retirement on September 9,” the minutes of that meeting read.

The imminent retirement of Hicks, 55, had not been discussed in any of the previous two years’ selectboard meetings, according to minutes, and it prompted a discussion during which town administrator Heather Butler was directed to reach out to the town of Shelburne to discuss sharing a chief.

An additional meeting was held August 31, at which Gilmore was appointed as acting chief; on September 14, at Gilmore’s request, the board unanimously appointed Hicks as an auxiliary officer.

Butler confirmed to the *Reporter* that Gilmore became the chief on see **CHIEF** page A3

G-M SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Supply Chain Issues Affect Food Service

By MIKE JACKSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – Homecoming will be held outdoors next Friday at Turners Falls High School, student representative Syna Katsoulis told the school committee on Tuesday, the latest adjustment to the pandemic’s new normal for the Gill-Montague regional district.

“Doing something outside might be something that we do, from year to year now, anyway,” said superintendent Brian Beck, adding that he planned to talk with the fire department about sources of outdoor heat, such as barrel fires.

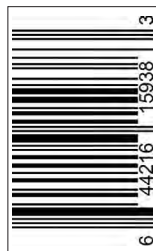
The new playground at Sheffield Elementary has been completed, despite bolts back-ordered amid national and global supply chain disruptions, but the latest symptom has been in food services. Beck reported that the administration has been meeting with students at the high school complaining of small portions, reduced options, and unexpected menu changes.

Beck said the department is troubleshooting problems stemming from undelivered food; they can stretch, but the high school lunch comes last in the day, and supplies do not always last. He promised to give updates at future meetings.

“Sometimes it’s not just the see **GMRSD** page A5

Tip: Store Each Newspaper In A Plastic Sleeve To Protect Its Resale Value

A Mariachi Band.....A2	Autumn Olive Paste.....B1	Out of the Park.....B3
Editorial.....A2	West Along: Apple Smells.....B1	Our Monthly Children’s Page.....B4
Letters to the Editors.....A2	Swamp Art Reviewed.....B1	Fishing During Major News.....B5
Local Briefs.....A3	The Montague City Rambler.....B2	Abbott & Costello Meet a Skeptic.....B5
10 Years Ago This Week.....A5	Downtown Runway Looks.....B2	Red-Carpet Scene.....B6
Gill Selectboard Notes.....A6	Milk & Cookies.....B2	Arts & Entertainment Calendar.....B7
Alpacas Peering.....B1	Montague Police Log.....B3	Four Comics and a Puzzle.....B7



The Montague Reporter

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Adjustments

Back in 2016, an overwhelming majority of Massachusetts voters – 78% – passed a ballot question mandating minimum cage sizes for pigs, calves, and laying hens. Question 3 got a lot of local attention here in Franklin County, because the only egg farm in the state directly affected by the measure was here in Wendell.

In defense of Diemand Farm, Wendell voters led the state’s “No on 3” vote that November. The town was also the most “Yes on 4,” in favor of legalizing cannabis, and the most in support of Green-Rainbow presidential candidate Jill Stein.

Cannabis did win out statewide, but Stein lost that election to Donald Trump – two outcomes that have had notable economic consequences. But “No on 3” also lost.

Diemand adjusted with a smaller, cage-free flock – their eggs are endorsed by the *Reporter* – but the law actually takes effect this January, and the other shoe is threatening to drop: the law affects not just farmers, but grocers, and most chicken eggs eaten in Massachusetts are laid by out-of-state hens.

Three-quarters of the nation’s commercial laying hens are kept in tiny, stackable “battery” cages. Similar dynamics are involved in the state’s pork imports. Eleven other states attempted to sue Massachusetts for the import ban, but the US Supreme Court refused to hear the case.

Amid all the other supply chain issues cascading from this pandemic year-and-a-half, it was projected that egg and bacon prices in the state were going to skyrocket, putting these staples out of range for many Massachusetts households.

Last Wednesday, the state House passed a bill that would adjust the law by dropping the minimum hen cage size from 1.5 square feet to 1 square foot, provided the hens can fly and roost vertically. It’s an attempt to meet a slowly changing industry halfway.

H.4194 passed the House by a 156 to 1 vote – the sole Nay came from Susannah Whipps of Athol, whose district includes Wendell (though it may not for long – see Jeff Singleton’s article on Page A1). And who can blame her? After all, Diemand adjusted to meet a standard that out-of-state farms will not be held to if the bill, now S.2481, passes the Senate.

It’s an interesting story to follow, all *opinions* aside, because it’s such a good case study of contemporary public policy. It has it all: the chaotic hazards and joys of

ballot initiatives; bureaucrats vs. farmers; good intentions versus consequences; and all the messes tied up in our broken and outdated federalist system.

States are laboratories for vanguard political projects of disparate sorts, both because they can be used to test legal theories and because enacting policies on a state level can have a real material effect. Compare the long-running efforts to use California as a forward wedge for more stringent vehicle emission standards with Texas’s recent *de facto* abortion ban.

Since January, all eyes have been on Washington, where (most) Democrats have been trying to pass two historic spending bills that, unlike much legislation, would have profound material effects on the lives of most Americans, ranging from childcare to bridges. These would mark the end of the trickle-down era. They may also not pass, because... Washington.

We are in a remarkable time. Fuel prices are rising, a number of factors are disrupting circulation of goods, and depending on who you ask, the post-COVID recovery is being sabotaged either by “labor shortages” due to no-goodniks who got spoiled on the federal teat during lockdown, or by the reluctance on the part of stingy employers to adjust wages upward to meet the real cost of living.

The mismatch is creating labor-force abstention, true, but it is also kicking off a strike wave the likes of which many of us have not been alive to see. West Coast healthcare workers at Kaiser Permanente, UAW members working at John Deere, and the entire International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (the folks that bring you television and movies) have all authorized strikes which may kick off in the coming weeks.

If the federal government fails to pass a major stimulus, this will all be a drop in the bucket compared to what comes next. Tectonic forces are at work, and there’s no telling what 2022 will look like: if they want us to keep laying eggs, they’re going to need to give us more space!

He’s Back!

Good to see Denis Bordeaux back in the comics! “Just Biden Time” proves he’s an equal opportunity political skewer!

Peter d’Errico
Leverett



Two members of Fiesta del Norte Mexican mariachi band, dressed in traditional sombreros and “charro” outfits, as they played the guitarron and trumpet during the Migrations Festival at the Great Falls Discovery Center on Monday.

Letters to the Editors

Dimensions of the Care Crisis

I am writing as there seems to be a silent crisis going on in our care systems. As we all know the pandemic was extremely challenging to our long term system of care, including the Soldiers Home (and no one from the former Farren Care Center ever had COVID) – too many people died in the care of those institutions.

Now the news has gone silent, but the care is still a terrible problem, as there are too few to provide that important care. Nursing home staff numbers have been decimated for a wide range of reasons: we don’t show respect for the care that they give to maintain the health and well-being of those they provide care to in the vast array of facilities where they live.

Their poor wages are certainly a factor, but also it has primarily been women who have provided this fantastic care. During the pandemic they had numerous reasons that they were unable to work, including childcare, but also the disease itself, the lack of PPE, and the loss over five years of immigrants to this country who were often willing to consider these jobs as a first step in entering our economy.

Childcare must become available to all who need it so that they can be sure care is provided so that they then can provide care to others, or do any job.

It’s also really about the lack of dignity that these staff receive from us and the people they take care of each day. If we really cared about those we loved, and therefore the care they receive, we would want to be sure these people received a living wage as well as decent benefits, career ladders, and ongoing support and training.

My understanding is that there are fewer and fewer staff who are working at nursing homes, and that means those who live there are not getting the care they need. Nor are the buildings being cared for as they should.

If you know of situations that are unsafe for your family member or friend, call the Ombudsman at your local Area Agency on Aging – e.g., LifePath for Franklin county and the North Quabbin; Western MA Elder Services for the Holyoke area; Highland Valley for the Northampton area. Or call the Department of Public Health complaint line to share a concern.

I don’t think that there has been the attention to this silent problem of not enough staff in facilities, but also in the community, where there is not enough staff to provide the care needed to those who want to reside at home. We must advocate for a living wage, and for respect for the work that they do.

On World Dignity Day, this year on Wednesday, October 20, think about what you can do so that each of us has the dignity we deserve.

Judi Fonsh, MSW
Leverett

Public Invited to Screening

The Social Justice Committee of All Souls Universalist Unitarian Church of Greenfield invites the public to join us for Part One of the 18th Annual Anti-Racism Film Festival. On October 24, 2021, at 2 p.m., we will offer a free showing of the film, *True Justice: Bryan Stevenson’s Fight for Equal Justice*.

Please join us for an in-person viewing in the Sanctuary of All Souls UU Church at 399 Main Street. We are not able to stream the film ourselves, but will offer information to those who prefer to watch it online.

This HBO documentary features Stevenson’s career as a civil rights lawyer in Alabama. As he tells the story of his life and career, it tracks the intertwining history of slavery, lynching, segregation, and mass incarceration, and his struggle to find justice and equality within a racist criminal justice system.

Following the film there will be a discussion led by educator Momodou Sarr. This will be available simultaneously on Zoom; contact administrator@uugreenfield.org to request a login.

We had hoped to show a full film festival with three films and whole-some meal served by Stone Soup, as

has been our tradition, but with the rise in COVID-19 cases in Franklin County, and the town of Greenfield putting back some restrictions, the church decided to limit food service inside the church. So we will show one film this month, and hope to show another in November.

To attend the in-person screening, you must be vaccinated and wear a mask while inside. The sanctuary is large and well ventilated, with ceiling fans and open windows.

We hope you can join us.

Ellen Blanchette
Greenfield

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Compiled by NINA ROSSI

Join FirstLight's Northfield Mountain staff for a **Hermit Castle and Valley View Hike** from 12:30 until 4 p.m. this Saturday, October 16. This 4.5-mile loop hike includes views of the Millers River valley, stories of Hermit Castle, beautiful rock formations, and a forest bursting with color.

The trek will begin on the back side of Northfield Mountain, and hike a section of the New England Scenic Trail. Hikers must be 18 years or older and comfortable hiking over somewhat hilly terrain with total elevation gain of 700 feet. Pre-registration at www.bookeo.com/northfield is required, as group size is strictly limited for this free program. Masks are also required.

The Stone Soup Café in Greenfield is hosting a **"Pay-What-You-Can" Movie Night** at the Greenfield Garden Cinemas this Sunday, October 16 at 6 p.m. The movie *Gather* will be screened. The film celebrates Indigenous food systems, and is described as "an intimate portrait of the growing movement of Native Americans reclaiming their spiritual, political, and cultural identities through food sovereignty."

Join the Ware River Nature Club for an **Exploring Fall Fungi walk** with Joe Choiniere at the Barre Falls Dam in Hubbardston this Sunday, October 17 at 1 p.m. Persistent summer rains have fueled widespread mushroom fruiting, which has continued into the fall. Walk-

ers may encounter *Amanita*, *Russula*, *Lactarius* and other common groups, and also some of the more mid- and late-fall groups like *Clitocybe* and *Hygrophorus*.

Besides your face mask (required), you may wish to bring a magnifying lens, camera, and a field guide. Pre-register by emailing warerivernatureclub@yahoo.com.

Concerned about food insecurity in our county? The Franklin County Community Meals Program is looking for people with a wide range of skills and expertise to serve on their board of directors. If you feel you have something to share and want to help plan events and fundraise with the group, be in touch with executive director Rachel Berggren at (413) 773-1033. There are many open opportunities for volunteers as well.

Lily Hevesh is a 23-year-old domino toppling sensation and popular YouTuber. A film about her rise to the top of this unusual field will be shown at the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center at 7 p.m. this Saturday.

The Museum will also hold its 14th Annual Domino Toppling Extravaganza this Sunday, October 17 with Hevesh and three other international toppling stars, who will have built a domino topple over the 48 hours prior to the event. Tens of thousands of domino bricks will be set in motion in an elaborate pattern at 5:30 p.m.

Tickets to the event are available online at bmac.org, or you can watch through Facebook Live.

Hevesh is the world's only full time, professional domino artist.

The K Street neighborhood in Turners Falls generously invites folks to their K Street Porch Crawl this Sunday, October 17 from noon-ish to 5-ish. There will be music at half a dozen porches, a food tent, desserts, fortune-telling, and plenty of careful, considerate, streetside fun.

Great Falls Books Through Bars is holding another volunteer work day at Just Roots Farm in Greenfield this Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. Help pack books into envelopes and write letters to incarcerated people who have requested books. The group was able to complete 98 book bundles at the last volunteer day.

You may drop in for as little or as long as you like without pre-registering, but you will need to follow COVID safety protocols like signing in, wearing a mask, and sanitizing your hands. More details at greatfallsbooksthroughbars.org.

The League of Women Voters is hosting a **Greenfield school committee candidate forum** next Thursday, October 21 at 6 p.m. via Zoom. This year, five candidates are running for the three available seats on the school committee. All the candidates will have the opportunity to answer voters' questions submitted in advance. Get yours in by emailing lwyfranklincounty@gmail.com. Register for the free Zoom event at the League's website, lvvma-franklincounty.org.

Join the Leverett Historical Commission for a virtual visit to the **Joseph Slarrow/North Leverett Mill** on Friday, October 22, at 7 p.m. Built around 1774 and in use until after World War II, this was the longest-running mill in Leverett, and a rare historic site now teetering on the edge of extinction.

Historians Pleun Bouricius and Dennis Picard and members of the commission will interpret what was once there and what is still there.

The visit is part of the ongoing project called *A Sense of Where You Are, Finding and Interpreting Mill Foundations in the Landscape*. You will learn about the history of the mill, and discuss its future. Free and open to the public, but registration is required at bit.ly/SlarrowMill. You will receive the link to the event once you have registered.

There is also an in-person follow-up site visit on Saturday, October 23, at 2 p.m. Please be prepared for uncertain footing and ticks, and observe protocols of masking and social distancing; indicate interest in the follow-up when you sign up.

On Sunday, October 24 at the Wendell Free Library there will be a free public launch of the new book ***Fish Discover Water Last: Richard L. Grossman on corporations, democracy and us***, by Wendell-based editor Anna Gyorgy and publisher Paul Richmond.

A reading of selections from the book and discussion will be held at the stone circle behind the library at 3 p.m., with mulled apple cider offered. Book sales benefit Friends of the Wendell Free Library. Please bring masks and lawn chairs; blankets and pillows if it is chilly. For more information, visit fishdiscoverwaterlast.net.

The Greenfield mayor's Urban Agenda Jobs Program has a few **job positions available for young people** at GCET and Sacred Holistic Arts. In order to be eligible, youth must be Greenfield residents. For more information please reach out to Idalis Salgado at idalissalgado@masshirefhcareers.org or (413) 774-4361 ext. 335.

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CHIEF from page A1

September 9, and said that auxiliary officers are reserved for detail duty.

She declined to comment on the criminal charge – of indecent assault and battery on a person 14 or over – that Hicks is currently facing in Northampton district court.

Buckland selectboard chair Zachary Turner did not respond as of press time to multiple requests for comment on the matter.

Hicks's indecent assault and battery case began on August 16, 2018, when a 37-year-old Buckland resident went to the state police barracks at Shelburne Falls to report that Hicks had groped her in a hallway at the police station, where she had gone to file a report.

A state police detective interviewed Hicks the next day, and filed a statement, available on the court docket, noting that Hicks "denied making any physical contact" with the alleged victim.

"It is my belief that the above facts establish probable cause," the detective summarized of his initial investigation, that Hicks "... did commit the crime of Indecent Assault and Battery on a Person Over 14..."

This charge would ultimately be filed in Northampton district court, by a special prosecutor appointed by the Worcester County District Attorney's office, on July 31, 2019. A spokesperson for the Northwest District Attorney's Office told the *Reporter* the prosecution was handed off to Worcester "to avoid any appearance of a conflict of interest due to this office's collaboration with Chief Hicks."

The prosecution, led by Assistant District Attorney Courtney Sans, requested a jury trial, and indicated that it expects to bring between seven and nine witnesses.

Hicks is represented by Worcester attorney

John Vigliotti, who according to his website is "associated with the Massachusetts Police Association Legal Defense Fund."

Hicks pled not guilty at an August 26, 2019 arraignment, and was released on personal recognizance and without bail on the condition that he have no contact with the alleged victim.

The following evening, the Buckland selectboard held a 47-minute executive session "to discuss complaints or charges brought against a public officer, employee, staff member or individual."

The court docket indicates that a steady stream of pre-trial and status hearings were held between October 2019 and July 2021, mainly concerning multiple requests by Vigliotti for the court to issue summons for medical records, and to allow him time to review them. "Parties report discovery just about complete," the docket from July 22 reads. A final pre-trial hearing on September 22 was continued until October 29.

Attempts to reach both Vigliotti and Hicks for comment were unsuccessful as of press time.

Neither Hicks's criminal charge, nor his retirement after 30 years at the helm of his department, has been covered in the local press. As of October 13, Hicks is still identified on the town website as police chief.

The pending charge was brought to the attention of the *Reporter* by a woman who identifies herself as a second victim of assault by Hicks.

"I believe more people will come forward," the woman, who spoke on condition of anonymity, wrote.

In a telephone interview, the woman alleged to the *Reporter* that Hicks assaulted her on three occasions between August and October 2020. When she decided to report these incidents to her town police last month, she was referred to the Worcester County District Attorney's office, and was sub-

sequently informed of Hicks's pending charge.

A spokesperson for the Worcester County District Attorney's office declined to say whether Hicks is believed to have been in possession of a firearm at the time of the alleged 2018 assault, citing the pending nature of the case.

On September 28, Shelburne town administrator Terry Narkewicz sent a letter to the Buckland selectboard signaling a willingness to discuss a "shared services model" between the towns.

"Although we have no interest in exploring a Police District governed by independent Commissioners," Narkewicz wrote, "we do believe there is potential for a long term inter-municipal agreement model similar to the Towns of Leverett and Wendell whereby one community contracts the services of another."

Butler, the Buckland town administrator, told the *Reporter* she expects Shelburne police chief Greg Bardwell and a representative of that town's selectboard to attend the November 9 Buckland selectboard meeting to discuss the idea, and that her town plans to wait until after that meeting to decide whether to hire for the position.

Published minutes indicate the Buckland board discussed regional services on February 23 and May 11. At the May meeting, Turner reported that he had surveyed area towns, and that "so far most towns want to share equipment and floater staff like police and highway department personnel." No mention of Hicks's anticipated retirement was recorded in any meeting minutes.

According to Butler, Hicks's retirement had been on the "collective radar" of the selectboard since at least 2019, when she began in the position. Butler said the board "had begun talking, sort of internally" about approaching Shelburne and other local towns about sharing services "if and when" Hicks retired.



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LEVERETT from page A1

duplication of effort in transferring paper documents into the department’s computer system.

Board member Melissa Colbert suggested revisiting the move in one year to see how it goes.

The chief advised the board that personnel processing permits, who are currently paid \$18 an hour, were likely to seek a pay raise in the future to match their regular hourly rate for department work.

He also noted that the availability of water from six fire hydrants being installed as part of the Teawaddle Hill Road water line project may reduce homeowner insurance rates in the area.

Recent Biting

The board conducted a dog hearing to adjudicate a complaint regarding a recent biting incident on Long Plain Road.

The dog in question belonged to someone staying at dog officer Roberta Bryant’s property, and was described by all concerned as a nice, elderly dog, who had never bitten anyone before, but was likely in bad humor due to having 14 stitches put in his leg several hours earlier without anesthesia. Witnesses testified the dog had been properly leashed to his owner’s wheelchair, and demonstrated “no malicious intent.”

Sue Patton, the victim in the case, said she would “hate to see something happen to this sweetheart because he was having a bum day.” Upon being referred to as the complainant, Patton said she had not filed a complaint, at which point Bryant said she had filed it, but only because she felt it was her duty as dog officer to do so.

The board decided to waive the \$15 penalty, and advised the owner that she may want to muzzle the dog for a few days, but that no further action was necessary.

Town clerk Lisa Stratford advised the owner that if the dog was living in Leverett it would need to be licensed. The board asked for this to be done within seven days, and the owner assured them it would be.

Friday Meeting

The selectboard announced that they will hold an extra meeting this Friday, October 15, at 9 a.m. to conduct interviews for the town treasurer and tax collector positions, along with continued discussion of contingency plans if the positions go unfilled.

The board also posted a discussion of the joint-policing project with Wendell to the agenda, with updates on progress with the intermunicipal agreement between the two towns and the renovation of Wendell’s police station, if any new information is available at the time of the meeting.

COVID Issues

Colbert presented a brief update on the status of the COVID-19 emergency, saying there was not much change since the previous meeting.

Colbert noted that infection rates were on the decline in Massachusetts and nationally, and that Pfizer booster shots had been authorized for people aged 18 or older in three high-risk groups: the elderly, those with underlying medical conditions, and those who work in high-risk settings such as healthcare.

Other Business

The board discussed clarifying the membership of the town’s emergency management team to address confusion over the matter. The eight-member team is stipulated to include one member each from the selectboard and board of health, the fire chief, the police chief, the highway department superintendent, an emergency management director, the facilities manager, and the town administrator.

While some members, such as the police chief, can be appointed by position due to being the sole holder of their position, others, such as board members, need to be appointed individually.

The board authorized planned-for, short-term borrowing to cover current costs of the Teawaddle Hill water line project. The borrowing will make use of a zero-interest state loan program designed for this purpose, and will be rolled into a long-term loan once the final cost is established.

The board signed a hauling contract with the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District.

The board was informed that the *ad hoc* 250th anniversary committee has decided not to reorganize as an official town committee or board, citing the constraints involved in state meeting and reporting requirements.

Selectboard member Tom Hankinson commented that some of the impetus for the group looking into official recognition involved potential fundraising activity, and suggested the group could still seek funding through a warrant article at the annual town meeting.



SPORTS from page A1

Faithful kept cheering and chanting.

The Ware Indians are undefeated. They currently sit atop the Intercounty North, and MaxPreps has them ranked #2 in the Massachusetts D-VIII rankings. Coming into Friday’s contest, Ware had averaged 38 points per game, so it wasn’t completely unexpected that the Eagles would be on the losing end of the 36-6 final.

But football is still enjoyable, no matter who wins. Kevin Hollister regaled the fans with his rendition of the National Anthem, and the players donned pink knee socks in support of breast cancer research.

Tech got the ball first and moved the rock to the Indians’ 39, but a fumble squashed the Eagles’ hopes. Ware quickly scored off two long runs and a QB keeper. It was the first of five touchdowns on the night.

Tech orchestrated long drives throughout the game, and actually led in time of possession, but they had no answer for Ware’s offensive prowess.

The Eagles finally put points on the board at the end of the third quarter when Chad Adams scored from three yards out. But they didn’t get the chance to build on their success. In the fourth, the clock went into mercy mode, which means that it didn’t stop ticking even for incomplete passes or out of bounds plays. So Tech had to settle for one touchdown on the night.

The Eagles head to Greenfield this Friday to take on the Green Wave in another ICN battle.

Field Hockey

East Longmeadow 4 – TFHS 0

On Thursday, October 7, the Spartans of East Longmeadow defeated the Turners Falls Blue Thunder 4-0.

This game was hard to watch – not because of the score, but because of the clock. The scoreboard behind the cage is not official; it’s just a rough estimate of the time left in each quarter. The official time is kept by the refs on the field. At the end of each period, the clock stops



Turners Falls’ Grady Deery reads the Hole No. 3 green as the Thunder hosted Hopkins Academy at Thomas Memorial Golf Course last Friday. (Eds.’ note: In our own version of the supply chain disruptions sweeping the globe, our sports reporter and photographer keep making it to different sports each week!)

ticking down, leaving the fans and the players in the dark.

So, with two minutes left in the first quarter and Turners playing a tight scoreless tie, the clock froze. For the next couple of minutes, the Spartans kept shooting at Turners’ goal and the Powertown D kept getting in the way, blocking every opportunity while the fans held their breaths. Finally, right before the horn sounded, Eastie slapped one into the net to break the 0-0 stalemate. I found out later that there were only 16 seconds left on the field clock.

The Spartans scored another goal in the second, and two more in the third, to take the contest 4-0.

For most of the game, Blue was playing in their own end. But that’s where they excelled. It was only the fearless defenders that kept East from scoring additional goals. They jumped, bumped, and slapped the ball away, doing everything they could to keep it out of the net. This led to multiple corner shot attempts by the Spartans. In fact, East Longmeadow was awarded an unbelievable 16 corner attempts while Turners wasn’t allowed any.

The Spartans stepped up their

game in the fourth, running coordinated attacks against the Blue D and goalie David Stowe. But Blue stifled every attempt, and East Longmeadow had to settle for the 4-0 win.

“We played hard today,” coach Renee Tela said after the game. “Our defense really stepped up. Our goal [Stowe] played a great fourth quarter.”

And he did. The ball got past Powertown’s last line of defense 16 times, and 12 of those shots-on-goal were repelled by Stowe.

After a week’s respite, the Thunder plays their next game up the Trail against the Warriors this Thursday, October 14.

Volleyball
TFHS 3 – Mahar 0
TFHS 3 – Athol 0
Frontier 3 – TFHS 0

The Turners Falls Volleyball Thunder defeated the Mahar Senators 3-0 over in Orange last Friday, and on Tuesday they beat the Athol Red Bears in their last home match of the regular season.

In the Mahar game, Big Blue held the Senators to single numbers in each match and outscored them 75-20 in total points. Taylor

Greene served eight aces, while Emily Young spiked two kills and gave four assists.

On Tuesday, as the Thunder bested Athol 25-7, 25-9, 25-14, Turners celebrated Olivia Stafford and Emily Young on Senior Night.

Both seniors have been playing V-Ball since sixth grade. It’s hard to believe that they’re seniors already. I met Emily’s family in the parking lot before the game. “We must have missed a year somewhere,” I exclaimed.

Indeed, the pandemic robbed the ladies of a whole year of team sports, but it didn’t stop them from achieving greatness during their tenure. When athletic director Adam Graves introduced both players, he mentioned their spectacular catches in the state championship softball game.

Against Da Bears, Madison Liimatainen made eight kills and served nine aces, while Young had eight kills and six aces.

On Wednesday night, the Thunder traveled down to South Deerfield and lost to the Frontier Red Hawks 3-0. It was Powertown’s first loss of the season. For Frontier, it was just one more hurdle in their bid to win back-to-back state titles.

The Hawks, like the Turners Falls softball team, are a dynasty with a storied past and a bright future. Before 2019, the last year that the MIAA held the tournament, the Red Hawks had won the states seven times in nine years. And like TFHS Softball, they clinched the Western Mass Title the other two years.

Frontier came out fast and strong in Wednesday’s contest, winning the first two matches 25-12 and 25-14. Blue made a little headway in the last match, scoring 17 to Frontier’s 25, but it wasn’t Turners’ night, and they failed to unseat the reigning state champions.

This Thursday, Powertown will try to get back on the winning track in Shelburne Falls against Mohawk, before traveling to Franklin Tech and Greenfield to wrap up their regular season.



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MONTAGUE from page A1

in a warrant that was required to be posted before the bids came in, was intended to be a “fail-safe” to cover high bids.

But it turned out not to be so. When the final bids were opened on October 6, the low proposal from David G. Roach and Sons proved to be over \$2.3 million, leaving a gap town administrator Steve Ellis estimated at over \$700,000, once oversight costs and a new “contingency” were included in the total. Factoring in the \$200,000 town meeting request, that still left a gap of \$535,665.

Ellis told the meeting that approximately \$491,493 of this could be covered by funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), which provides grants for local sewer and water projects; water and sewer lines will be attached to the footbridge. The remaining \$78,038, Ellis said, could potentially be covered from a range of sources, including funds from real estate sales, a recent agreement with the First-Light Power company, or the town capital stabilization fund.

Selectboard member Matt Lord asked about the timing of the contract, and the approval of available funding. “Do we need to have all funding sources identified prior to acceptance of a bid?” he asked.

Town accountant Carolyn Olson replied that the town would need the funding “in place before you run up against the balance of the contingency... to wait and see if you actually needed it.”

Ellis said the town would need the selectboard to agree to designate the ARPA funding for the bridge, and “some or all” of the town meeting appropriation, to award the bid.

CIC chair Greg Garrison pointed out that the use of ARPA funds would not require a town meeting vote, which would “allow us to go forward in the smoothest way possible” and meet the “stringent deadlines” to finish the bridge project.

But Garrison also pointed out that if the town used ARPA funds for the bridge project, they could not be used for other projects at the water pollution control facility “and the many other capital needs we have.”

Finance committee chair Jen Audley raised the issue of new “background materials” town meeting would need to “get up to speed” before it voted on the \$200,000 request already on the warrant. Ellis said he believed the town and project engineers were “airtight” as to the project’s eligibility for the ARPA funds.

The board unanimously voted to approve Ellis’s preliminary proposal. “It will probably be the way we go, but you never know,” said selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz. The selectboard vote does not change the \$200,000 request for the bridge which will go to town meeting on Saturday.

STM Warrant

Putting the footbridge aside, the rest of the warrant contains an additional 12 articles, which the board hoped would encourage a short meeting.

One of the more controversial departmental requests, eventually endorsed unanimously by the selectboard, capital improvements, and finance committees, was **Article 10**, appropriation of \$114,362 to purchase a “robotic sewer camera.” Public works superintendent Tom Bergeron argued that the camera would allow his department to reduce the amount of “exploratory digging” to evaluate sewer leaks, and allow for better mapping of the town’s aging sewer infrastructure.

Finance committee members expressed concern that they had not seen this request sooner to give time to evaluate it, but unanimously endorsed it at a previous joint meeting.

Article 2 would transfer \$29,000 from free cash to increase the police dispatch budget to fund a wage in-

crease for dispatchers, recently negotiated with their union.

A small appropriation of \$1,300, **Article 3**, will allow the town to hire clerical help to take finance committee minutes, previously done on a volunteer basis by members. The background material states that, unlike other committees that meet frequently, the fin com does not get assistance from town staff for minutes.

Article 4 would transfer \$12,000 from airport earnings into earnings to the town, to begin compensating the latter for a supplemental appropriation earlier this year related to the purchase of Pioneer Aviation. **Article 7** would appropriate \$135,000 from free cash to supplement a federal grant to eliminate annual flooding on Montague City Road, and under **Article 9**, \$50,000 would be appropriated from the cannabis stabilization fund to finance “evidence-based substance abuse prevention.”

Article 1 would allocate \$13,367.33 to pay a bill to the water pollution control facility submitted late by a vendor, and \$7,712 would be transferred from the general fund to the capital project fund to lower debt payments for money borrowed for the new public works facility (**Article 5**).

Article 6 would allocate funds received from Comcast, the town’s cable provider, to the local access station MCTV for capital expenses. Two **articles (11 and 12)** transfer funds from free cash into three targeted funds, including a fund to help finance future retiree health benefit costs.

A final article would rescind \$102,000 of borrowing for abating hazardous materials at the former Strathmore Mill complex. That project came in under budget.

The meeting is scheduled for 10 a.m. this Saturday, October 16, on the grounds of the Franklin County Technical School at 82 Industrial Boulevard in Turners Falls.



reduced tuition in from Erving students. Blier showed a number of ways she is trying to squirrel cash away in revolving accounts for future use. Preliminary discussion of the FY’23 budget kicks off on November 23.

Large portions of Tuesday’s meeting were spent listening to official improvement plans for the elementary schools – all were approved – and discussing the upcoming annual meeting of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees. Montague member Jennifer Waryas will attend as a delegate, and vote on a number of resolutions on behalf of Gill-Montague.

Proposals that drew unanimous support were the inclusion of 20 minutes of recess under school learning time requirements; funding for school-based clinics, connecting students with the internet at home, and disability services; alternatives to the MCAS standardized tests and zero-tolerance disciplinary politics; and a ban on Native mascots. A resolution about making electric buses mandatory was tabled.

The committee briefly discussed a return to in-person meeting, but decided to stick to Zoom, and reflected on its positive aspects.

Montague member Mike Langknecht suggested that remote meeting should be permanently made a legal option. “It’s been a real boom for the meeting industry,” he said.

“I think we’ve gained a lot by making it possible,” agreed chair Jane Oakes.



The Town of Erving

has two **redevelopment opportunities** available: an RFP for the former grade school at 18 Pleasant Street, and an RFI for the former IP Mill complex.

More information at www.erving-ma.gov/bids

PUBLIC HEARING

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 138, General Laws, as amended, the Inhabitants of the Town of Montague are hereby notified that Watershed Restaurant, LLC, *d/b/a* Watershed Restaurant, Melissa Stetson as manager, has applied for a transfer of the All Alcoholic Beverages Liquor License (Restaurant) from Bread and Water, LLC *d/b/a* The Alvah Stone. The premise is located at 440 Greenfield Road, Montague, MA consisting of the lower two levels of the Montague Mill building, main entrance on top level with alternate door on top level. Fire exit on lower level, second fire exit on upper level. Includes outside deck.

Date and place of hearing: **Monday, October 25, at 6:35 P.M.** at the Town Hall, 2nd Floor, Selectmen’s Meeting Room, One Avenue A, Turners Falls and via ZOOM at www.montague-ma.gov/d/5481/Selectboard-Meeting.

Montague License Commissioners

LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here’s the way it was on October 20, 2011: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

Erving Discusses School Regionalization

Erving’s planning committee for school regionalization will send letters to four nearby school districts (Gill-Montague, Greenfield, Mahar, and Pioneer Valley) to open discussions about possible regionalization. That was the word from Beth Lux, committee alternate, to the Erving school committee this week.

Planning committee member Jacquelyn Boyden observed that regionalization plans may become more pressing as other towns make regionalization decisions.

“If Leverett and Shutesbury leave [Union 28], then Erving will be scrambling,” she said.

Boyden asked that the school committee request the town moderator to appoint an alternate member to the planning committee, because scheduling conflicts make it difficult for the current committee members to arrange meetings. She stressed the need for the planning committee to meet monthly, because regionalization “seems to be on the fast track.”

Soundscapes Dominate Brick & Mortar Video Fest

Last weekend, downtown Greenfield’s historic buildings came alive during the Third Annual Brick & Mortar International Video Art Festival. On October 14 and 15, the festival presented con-

temporary video art from around the world in Greenfield buildings, some of which are normally sealed off to the public because they’re in various stages of renovation, such as the 4th floor of Wilson’s Department Store, the Abercrombie building, the Pushkin and the First National Bank.

The festival provides a unique opportunity for the public to encounter art in architectural spaces for free. The organizers of the festival trust their audience enough to challenge them by bringing international *avant garde* video art to the main streets of Greenfield.

Shea Theater Welcomes Spirit Medium for Messages from the Other Side

Fall in New England comes with a chill in the air, the crunch of dried leaves under your feet, and ghostly images adorning houses and yards. And this year it also brings Lisa Lanno, spirit medium, to the Shea Theater in Turners Falls. Lanno will be hosting a full two-hour session of paranormal readings in “Messages from the Other Side” on October 29 from 7 to 9 p.m.

“If spring is the time of new beginnings, then fall is often seen as the time for endings or death. Even the holidays reflect that theme: All Hallows’ Eve, All Saints Day, Dia De Los Muertos,” said Kimberley Morin, president of the Shea board of directors. “It’s a great time of year to bring a spirit medium to the theater, to welcome people who would like to reach out to those who have passed.”



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DISTRICTS from page A1

would also acquire Northfield from Paul’s district.

But it would no longer include Wendell, which along with Shutesbury and New Salem would move into a “Seventh Hampden” district. The Seventh Hampden would hug the Quabbin reservoir to the north and west, then move south to include Belchertown and Ludlow. (Small portions of Springfield and Chicopee were taken out of this district, currently represented by Jacob Oliviera.)

Senate

There has been much less buzz about the state proposal for new Senate districts, probably because most Franklin County towns will remain in the district currently represented by Joanne Comerford.

Her district will continue to include – in addition to Greenfield, Montague, Wendell, Gill, Erving and Leverett – Amherst and Northampton to the south, and Gill and Northfield to the north.

The district will gain Athol, Petersham, Winchendon and Ashburnham to the east, while losing Colrain, Whately, and South Hadley to the west and south.

Carving Up Maps

While anger at the Montague town clerk may be minimal, not so the reaction from Greenfield officials to the new map. Mayor Roxann Wedegartner, in a press statement, said she was opposed “in no uncer-

tain terms... to the city being split in half.” The mayor suggested her city should in fact be in a district composed solely of Franklin County communities including Montague.

Whipps, who represents the Second Franklin, was also not enthusiastic about the division of Greenfield, part of which may soon be part of her domain. She told the *Reporter* that officials in her hometown of Athol will probably oppose the move, preferring to remain in a “North Quabbin”-oriented district.

As of this press time, it was not clear whether the proposed division of Greenfield was drawn using city precinct or US Census tracts, although officials believed that the latter was more probable.

While precincts have generally been the mechanism for dividing cities and towns into districts, a delay in the reprecincting process this year, coupled with pressure from advocacy groups lobbying for greater minority representation, may have caused the state legislature to go with Census tracts.

However, describing the re-configuration of a district in and around Holyoke, redistricting committee co-chair Michael Moran has stated that his committee used *both* precincts and Census tracts to extend that district north to Chicopee.

At a hearing of the legislature’s joint redistricting committee, Moran implicitly defended the process that produced the current proposal, though he did not refer to the results in Franklin County. He said the pro-

cess was the result of 19 hearings, which had been posted on the committee’s website in 110 languages.

The most recent hearing begins a public comment period on the new proposals. US Congressional redistricting maps are still to come.

Matters of Interest

Much of Moran’s presentation was devoted to explaining the new “majority-minority opportunity districts” in the House, which have increased under the new proposal from 20 to 33. He defined such districts as those where the “non-Hispanic White percentage is less than 50%.”

Advocates of so-called majority-minority districts have justified the reform as creating “communities of interest” which, according to progressive advocacy organization the Brennan Center for Justice, are “composed of groups of individuals who are likely to have similar legislative concerns, and who might benefit from cohesive representation in the legislature.”

The concept has become widely popular among officials throughout the recent Massachusetts redistricting process. Mayor Wedegartner employed it when criticizing the current redistricting plan which placed Greenfield in the same district as Athol and other “North Quabbin” towns.

“Athol and Orange are lovely towns,” she stated. “But they share a *community of interest* with each other, not with Greenfield...”



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NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

Walls, Then Help

By JERRI HIGGINS

A \$2,100 purchase order request for used wall panels was the only new business item on the Gill selectboard agenda. The meeting was held Tuesday evening due to Monday’s holiday.

Town administrator Ray Purington told the selectboard that the price included delivery and installation by BBE Office Interiors of Pittsfield, and said the purchase would be “a good deal.” He said that the panels would create a separate space in the town office for an administrative assistant.

“Are we getting an administrative clerk now?” asked selectboard chair Greg Snedeker.

“Once I have a place to put a desk for the person to sit at,” answered Purington, adding that he would be

going through received applications and then making his hiring recommendation to the selectboard.

“If you build it, they will come?” quipped selectboard member Charles Garbiel.

“This is long overdue,” Snedeker said, remarking on the two years since Purington had an administrative assistant.

The purchase order was accepted by consensus.

Other Business

The Slate Memorial Library will host a “braided-in” rug-making workshop on Thursday, October 14, from 6 to 8 p.m. Purington told the board members. He said that the library will also host a children’s Halloween party on Saturday, October 30, at 4 p.m. More information is available on the town website.

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Above: Friendly alpacas at South Cross Alpacas in Gill are curious to see what our photographer is up to.

NOTES FROM THE HEARTFELT CAFE
BY TROUBLE MANDESON

GREENFIELD – Did you know that there is a secret stash of edible berries in the area that are growing right under your nose? That would be *Elaeagnus umbellata*, otherwise known as the autumn olive, which is in the oleaster family. Since the berries are dotted with silver scales, the plant is also referred to as *silverberry*. The autumn olive earns its name from the oval



Soak autumn olives in water after harvesting to clean out the leaves and twigs.

grayish-green leaves with silvery scales on the bottom that resemble olive leaves. The bell-shaped flower clusters produce silvery fruit that ripens to plump red berries with a splash of beige dots in late September and early October. These bushes are tall, up to 20 feet high, and 30 feet wide. This deciduous shrub is native to Asia and was introduced to North America in the early 19th century. In the 1950s, it was widely used for wildlife habitat and erosion control, which is why you’ll often find them growing along roads and highways. The impact of its introduction to North America was a terrible displacement of native species, as its prolific fruit and seeds spread uncontrollably and disrupted native ecosystems. These amazing berries are loaded with vitamins A, C, and E, plus flavonoids and essential fatty acids. They are nutrient-rich and are believed to help prevent cancer and heart disease. Scientists were astounded to learn that lycopene, the pigment that colors tomatoes red, is 17 times higher in the autumn olive berry than the typical raw tomato. We are surrounded by this gem, viewed as an invasive species rather than a treasure of good health. In articles I’ve read, the authors suggest that when cooking with autumn olive berries, because of its propensity to overtake native plants, the seeds should be disposed of where they cannot propagate. It’s one way of ensuring they won’t spring up in new places. I discovered the existence of autumn olives in a 2015 issue of *Edible Pioneer Valley*, a full ten years

see **HEARTFELT** page B8

the arts
Down in the Swamp Show:
A Floating Exhibition on the Connecticut River Oxbow

By **W. KAIZEN**

NORTHAMPTON – Curator Charlotte Kohlmann regularly climbs to Skinner Park atop Mount Holyoke to look down on the oxbow in the Connecticut River, taking in a view that was one of the original sight-seeing destinations in the US. When Hudson River School painter Thomas Cole made his way

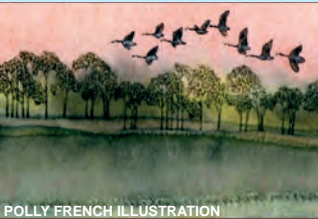
up to see the same view in 1833, it was already a tourist trap. Hikers were visiting so regularly that a refreshment stand awaited people at the top. The large painting that Cole made based on his visit, *View from Mount Holyoke, Northampton, Massachusetts, after a Thunderstorm – The Oxbow*, has become a quintessential American landscape

painting. The oxbow loops curvaceously between the wild, stony mountains on the upper left of the painting and the idyllic farms on its lower right, uniting the sublime wilderness of the untamed environment with the arcadian beauty of lives lived in harmony with nature. Cole excluded both tourism and industry from *The Oxbow*, although their impact was already being felt. In an essay written while he was working on the painting, Cole decried the effects that deforestation and pollution were having on the Northeast. Not long after, due to human intervention, the oxbow flooded, its appearance forever changed. Today, Route 91 has chopped up what’s left of the Oxbow. A railroad runs alongside it, as do numerous commercial developments. The Oxbow Marina’s sign is more noticeable from the highway than the Oxbow itself. Looking down from above, Kohlmann was moved to bring people closer to what remains of our area’s most famous natural wonder, so she curated the Swamp Show, an

see **SWAMP** page B6



Esther Clark’s ceramic Remembering Places (Remembering Dreams).



WEST ALONG THE RIVER
APPLES IN THE HALL

By **DAVID BRULE**

THE FLAT, ERVINGSIDE – Our apples hang golden, definitely apples of the sun, rather than Yeats’s silver apples of the moon. They are golden, all right, but with blotches. They are winter keepers, they fall *kerplunk* under the heirloom Baldwin tree. In some years, if all goes well, we should be able to savor summer apples in winter. This crop won’t make it to winter, though; they’ve all fallen together over the last month. No chance to climb a ladder to pick them. They now fill the front hall, reminding me of the early days of the last century when a generation of five brothers lived in this house. Running up and down the front hall stairs, slamming the door, off to school, a ball game or later to work up at the Tool Shop, racing behind their father in his wagon drawn by Old Dan. Maybe they caught up with the wagon and jumped on. But that was more than 100 years ago, when my grandfather and his brothers were young. I’m sure they’d approve of this year’s apples, gathered up and brought inside the hall to wait to be turned into applesauce, or better still, pies. Apples lend their autumn rural smell to the house. Sweetness fills the front hall, and apples are tucked into every corner of the kitchen, taking up floor space near the easy chair or behind the Glenwood cookstove. Out under the tree, bees and wasps, though fewer this year due to the rainy summer, savor the apples dropped and left where they fell, too many for us to gather up. Their golden skin opened by deer and squirrel, apple flesh softening under the sun serving as a sweet attraction for yellowjackets. They glean and savor that sweetness, and then slightly drunken on the fermenting apple flesh, rise ever so tipsy and clearly feeling no pain, paying us no mind as we brush by.

the fermentation. They cross the street on dainty hooves, stretch down long necks into the grass to munch contentedly like old-time Dobbin crunching on the proffered apple. No bear has yet come, but one may. They do visit our cousins’ yard up on the ever-so-civilized Crocker Avenue, but none have come here where the river bottom landscape is much wilder. The bear season is open out on the Plains and up on the sheltering mountain, so maybe brother bear has been pushed around the region by hunters. May all their shots miss. We’re in no rush to have bear back, though. Soon enough, soon enough. Out here, leaves are coming down, and that Baldwin tree is already bare. We’ve always enjoyed seeing the broad branches of that tree in the frosty morning with a dozen decorative fruit hanging into the winter. But not this year. By the first days of October, the tree was already shorn, most apples dropped. Wet weather all summer has discouraged brilliant foliage, fading and darkened leaves are already drifting downward. The yard is littered with leathery, brown leaves. Leaf peepers lament the dull landscape as we do. Yet dozens and dozens of yellow-rumped warblers swarm those bare branches. Back in the last century, we knew these birds as *myrtle* warblers, but some bird bureaucrat decided the banal yellowrump name would make this species more easy to identify, I guess. Regardless, these visitors are taking advantage of an exceptional hatch of midges, no-see-ums and other diaphanous-winged insects that fill the warm air. The warblers have spent more than a week in the yard, pirouetting and dancing in catching their meal in the wane sunshine, feasting on the bug bounty. White-throated sparrows have come down from Wendell for the winter, down from the pine woods

see **WEST ALONG** page B3



Male (left) and female (right) myrtle warblers, Setophaga coronata.



DAKIN HUMANE SOCIETY PHOTO

“MILK & COOKIE”

Is there a better combo than milk and cookies? This mother daughter pair are looking for a new home together. They’ve been in foster care and foster mom adores them. She says they “are the sweetest, most social guinea pigs I’ve ever met. They run up to say hi and love being petted and sitting in your lap.” Guinea pigs are incredibly social animals who need to be kept in

pairs or groups to thrive. The fee to adopt Milk and Cookie is \$55. Interested in adopting? Animals at Dakin are available only in Springfield currently. Contact adoption staff at springfield@dakinhumane.org and include your name and phone number. For more information, call (413) 781-4000 or visit www.dakinhumane.org.

Senior Center Activities OCTOBER 18 THROUGH 22

WENDELL

Wendell Senior Center is open for a foot care clinic the first Wednesday of each month. Call Katie Nolan at (978) 544-2306 for information or appointments. Senior Health Rides are now available. Contact Susan von Ranson at (978) 544-3758 to set up a ride.

GILL and MONTAGUE

The Gill Montague Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Mondays through Fridays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Council on Aging Director is Roberta Potter. For more information call 863-9357. Messages can be left on our machine when the center is not open.

Monday 10/18

10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
1 p.m. Knitting & Crafts Circle
Tuesday 10/19
3 p.m. Tai Chi
Wednesday 10/20
9 a.m. Veterans’ Agent Hours
10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
1 p.m. Bingo
1:30 p.m. Mobile Pantry
4 p.m. Mat Yoga
Thursday 10/21
10 a.m. Chair Yoga
1 p.m. Cards & Games
Friday 10/22
10:15 a.m. Aerobics

11 a.m. Chair Exercise

ERVING

Erving Senior Center is open 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. Open for cards, coffee, and billiards. Fitness room also open. Exercise classes will be limited to 15 people per class. No lunch will be served. We will continue with Brown Bag the first Thursday of each month. For any questions or concerns, please call Paula at (413) 423-3649. Masks are optional. Proper handwashing and social distancing are still required.

Mondays

9 a.m. Stretch & Balance
10:30 a.m. Zumba Gold Floor
Tuesdays
9 a.m. Stretch & Sculpt
10:30 a.m. Line Dancing
Wednesdays
9 a.m. Chair Class
10:30 a.m. Zumba Gold Chair
11:30 a.m. Bingo
Thursdays
9 a.m. Restore & Re-Emerge
10:30 a.m. GOOD for You
Fridays
9 a.m. Quilting Workshop

LEVERETT

Chair Yoga classes are held on Zoom on Wednesdays. For more information, contact the Leverett COA at (413) 548-1022 x 5, or coa@leverett.ma.us.

Senior Grocery Hours

Big Y: Senior hours from 7 to 8 a.m. (413) 772-0435
Foster’s: Senior hours from 7 to 8 a.m. (413) 773-1100
Green Fields Market: Senior hours from 8 to 9 a.m. Monday-Saturday. Curbside pickup & delivery is available on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. (413) 773-9567
McCusker’s Market: Curbside pickup available from 10 to 11 a.m. Order by 1 p.m. for pickup the following day. Delivery available Monday to Friday. Email pickup@franklincommunity.coop (413) 625-2548
Stop and Shop: Senior hours from 6 to 7:30 a.m. (413) 774-6096

The Montague City Rambler:



Love and Obstacles

By LILITH WOLINSKY

MONTAGUE CITY – Every fall, just as the days shorten and the nights chill, some deep and quiet place within me turns somber for a few weeks’ time, as my inner axis adjusts to less sun, less chlorophyll, fewer birds, a significant drop in the temperature, and a larger percentage of time lived indoors.

Once I have acclimated, I take joy in using my oven, sleeping beneath heavy blankets, and tackling indoor projects – sewing, hanging pictures, and organizing cupboards – but still, for as long as I can remember, with the brilliant blaze of yellow and red leaves in the background, there is this transition, and sadness needing accompaniment.

This season, too, there is my mother’s bumpy transition from a life of fierce independence to life in a residential facility. It has been a brutal eighteen months for residential elder care, with the enormity of COVID-related deaths, and staff shortages stacked on top of an industry already chock-full

of entities squeezing profit out of overworked, underpaid, and often hastily trained employees, who struggle to provide dignified care to the vulnerable elders who gave their time birthing, raising, teaching and serving the whole lot of us. The lack of resources, the profit motive, is a shameful business.

My mother is in a facility well regarded for having kind and thoroughly trained staff, and still: they enter her room without knocking or identifying themselves, trampling her privacy and what remains of her autonomy, and frightening her into thinking she’s been burglarized. She takes great joy in opening her mailed packages, but these are whisked away as though her family were the Unabomber, and against our express wishes. Rushed staff neglect to speak slowly and calmly while her damaged brain takes time to process information, nor do they take the time to sort out her intentions when her aphasia is in full bloom. She is often frustrated and angry, and calls people names as a result of these casually enacted

transgressions.

I watched on Skype last week as their new head nurse, unaware I was “in” the room, stepped close to my mother with a COVID swab, trying to quickly jab it up her nose as my mother said no. I intervened and stopped the nurse’s behavior, but my already diminished confidence has been further shaken by this experience, which I only randomly observed. The nurse expressed no remorse, but insisted that my mother be tested, while she herself was not wearing a mask in a facility full of elders with a suspected COVID positive amongst her coworkers. She demanded that my impaired mother understand, and demonstrate responsibility, while she herself, presumably intact, understood and demonstrated none.

Nationally, our current president has the sense and compassion to seek a solution to the problems of eldercare, so morbidly heightened by COVID, while Democratic infighting, and Republicans who presumably have parents (although the degree of caring sometimes seems reptilian), obstruct at every turn.

Locally, my nerves are a jangle with trying to keep my far-away mother safe in a system supplying a steady stream of data that demonstrates (mostly) benign neglect, and incompetence.

I lie awake at night rearranging the existing resources in my mind like puzzle pieces, searching to see if there is anything I have overlooked, a way I can care for my mother myself, while working full time and managing my own intermittent health challenges.

My tiny piece of land, as ever, the river, and the sky, support and help me settle.

FACES & PLACES



At left: Richie Richardson, owner of the downtown Turners Falls boutique F&B, presented his “F&B 4 Fall Collection” with an outdoor runway show last Saturday.



Above: Victoria, with a reversible cachet coat.

At right: Jahfreeya models a scarf and tunic dress designed by Richardson.

Fashion people and curious Second Street neighbors alike watched the show, which included live music and message segments.

Models strutted the runway with placards bearing slogans such as “Shop Local Isn’t A Whites Only Sign.”



ALEX MCGUIGAN PHOTOS

Fashion coordination was provided by New York City-based stylist Jerry Jordan Brown, with handbags (not pictured) designed by Doriet Chichester exclusively for the show.

Anthony Allred provided sound and entertainment, and Kathryn Greenwood Swanson of Swanson’s Fabrics hosted.

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WEST ALONG from page B1

farther north. They too swarm the low bushes, chirp and call a one-note of two, nothing like song. Theirs is a familiar call of autumn when dusk falls.

Lights come on early in the house, earlier and earlier. Already there's a fire in the Glenwood to take off the indoor chill. Back in from the evening's walk down the leaf-littered path leading from the river, in the front door we come, greeted by that sweet, slightly fer-

mented country smell of apples.

Smells, like old songs, can do that – can connect us again with the old days of the 19th century, when autumn ghosts are welcomed to come down the stairs from the hidden corners of the attic, up near the roof beams. They're glad to be noticed and remembered, they savor with us the long-gone sweetness of the golden apples in the hall.

Check out David's site at riverstoriesdavidbrule.com.



OUT OF THE PARK OCTOBER 2021

By JON DOBOSZ

UNITY PARK – Hello and happy October, everyone! It's a great time of year; the leaves are starting to turn, the air is crisp, and we're making homes for our jack-o'-lanterns and scarecrows! It's been a busy autumn here at MPRD, that's for sure.

On Tuesday, October 12 registration for our **Youth Basketball Program** for Montague residents began. Youth B-ball is held from December through the end of February. We offer an instructional program for children in grades K through 2, Junior Travel for kids in grades 3 and 4, and a Senior Travel program for those in grades 5 and 6.

Our instructional program goes from January 5 to February 9, and is held at Sheffield Elementary. The travel teams participate in the Tri-County Youth Basketball League with other area communities. Registration for non-residents begins Monday, November 8. Spots fill up fast, so register early!

To get into the spirit of the spooky season, we will be showing our first **Monster Movie in The Park** on Friday, October 15 at Peskeomskut Park. We will be showing the classic movie *Jurassic Park* with a showtime of 7 p.m. Be sure to bring a couple of blankets with you. Rain date will be Friday, October 29.

We had another great year with this movie series, and would like to



thank RiverCulture for partnering with us, as well as the Friends of Sheffield Elementary, and Paul Wonsey for being our tech dude. We look forward to bringing movies back next summer.

We'll also be hosting the **Pumpkin Decorating Station** again at this year's Great Falls Festival. The festival will be held Saturday, October 23, with decorating from 2 p.m. to dusk while supplies last. We'll be located in the same spot as years past, at the corner of Avenue A and Second Street. Stop by and bring your artistic talents.

Pre-registration for our **Annual Sawmill River 10k Run** will also begin soon. The Sawmill Run is scheduled for Saturday, January 1, 2022, and is our major special event of the winter. If you're a runner, hope to be one, or know of someone who is, this is the perfect way to start off the new year. We had to run the event "virtually" last year, so we look forward to returning to an in-person race.

Of course, you can find additional information on all of these programs and more on our website, www.montagueparksrec.com, as well as our Facebook page. That's about it from here. Enjoy the rest of your October, and we'll talk to you next month!

Jon Dobosz, CPRP, is parks and recreation director for the town of Montague.



MONTAGUE COMMUNITY TELEVISION NEWS

Monitor the Bureaucrats!

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

TURNERS FALLS – MCTV has all of the latest board meetings up on Vimeo. Look for the Montague finance committee meeting, the Gill-Montague regional school committee meeting, the Montague selectboard meeting, and the Gill selectboard meeting to stay up to date on local government!

As always, all community members are welcome to submit their videos to be aired on Channel 17, as well as featured on the MCTV Vimeo page.

MCTV is always available to

assist in local video production as well. Cameras, tripods, and lighting equipment are available for checkout, and filming and editing assistance can be provided.

The station is also looking to hire a producer to make Spanish-language content. Please email infomontaguetv@gmail.com with a resume to schedule an interview!

Something going on you think others would like to see? If you get in touch, we can show you how easy it is to use a camera and capture the moment. Contact us at (413) 863-9200 or infomontaguetv@gmail.com.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Corn Maze; Cherry Bombs; Sleepy Driver and Squirrel; Resisting Arrest; Swearing Kids; Loud Wedding DJ

Sunday, 10/3

1:17 p.m. 911 Misdial near Canal Street. Open line, general talking/background noise heard, sounded like possible pocket dial, no response to silent call procedure.

3:34 p.m. Reporting party on West Chestnut Hill Road calling to report that his dog is missing. The dog was last seen around 11:30 in front of her home. The dog is a Pomeranian, mostly brown with some tan, wearing a collar that is red, pink, and blue with hearts.

6:22 p.m. Caller reports an erratic driver on Montague Road. The driver keeps slamming on his brakes and swerving. While on the phone with the dispatcher, he drove into a corn field and backed up, almost hitting the caller.

10:18 p.m. Unwanted person in apartment on East Main Street, Millers Falls. While on the phone, the person left. Officer advised.

Monday, 10/4

12:32 a.m. Report of gunshots in the area of Avenue A. Caller states it doesn't sound like the normal fireworks they sometimes have in the area, and no bright lights either. A passerby stated it was cherry bomb fireworks. Referred to an officer.

6:31 a.m. Caller from Lake Pleasant requests that a call be placed to the railroad to ask them to turn the train down.

10:29 a.m. Caller from Keith Apartments is concerned about all of the activity at night happening on the property. On several different occasions someone has banged or kicked residents' doors late at night, and they are all afraid that people are trying to break in. Caller spoke to Housing, but they were unhelpful. While on the phone with dispatch, the caller experienced a medical emergency, so she is not available for comment at this time.

5:19 p.m. Caller reporting she saw a drug deal earlier on Fourth Street. All the parties are gone now.

9:49 p.m. Montague City Road caller stated that her upstairs neighbors are yelling, screaming, and running around. Officer advised the building was quiet upon arrival.

10 p.m. Caller from Federal Street stated the neighbors are working on something in a garage, and are making a lot of noise. Officer advised that he could hear metal cutting and music playing when he arrived. The garage door was open. He advised the party of the complaint, and the party stated he was going to turn down the music and shut the garage door.

Tuesday, 10/5

8:14 a.m. Report from bus driver that an RV just broke off the bus's rear view mirror at Avenue A and Third Street.

4:55 p.m. Accidental 911. Caller was trying to get into her truck and works for Red Fire Farm. She is in the middle of one of their fields, and there is no emergency.

5:45 p.m. Erratic driver on Route 63 going towards Erving. The vehicle is described as small and white, swerving all over the road, flashing high beams, and passing on the right. All units advised.

5:56 p.m. Caller from Fourth Street reporting someone is shooting an airsoft rifle, and one hit his porch. Believes it might be coming from the brick building down the road from him on the opposite side. Nothing observed, spoke with two individuals who stated they did not see or hear anything.

8:57 p.m. Driver hit a deer, and would like an officer to respond.

Wednesday, 10/6

12:47 p.m. Anonymous report of an unattended small dog in a black sedan with Vermont tags in front of Aubuchon.

2:18 p.m. General disturbance at Unity Park. Director of parks and rec requested an officer to advise a group of kids at the playground to stop swearing. Officer advised them to act appropriately.

3:50 p.m. Caller reports suspicious activity at Fourth Street, stated it was possibly a drug deal. All parties have left already, officer advised.

5:56 p.m. Caller says that the intersection street sign was in the road at Fifth and L streets, and she moved it into the grass. DPW to be notified.

6:22 p.m. Single-vehicle accident with property damage on Montague Avenue. The vehicle almost went over the cliff. Caller stated that the driver was sleeping and snoring when she went to check on her. Officer advised, Montague Center FD on scene, removed to hospital.

Thursday, 10/7

5:13 p.m. Caller from Central Street wants it on record that she was part of a Social Security phone scam. Services rendered.

6:43 p.m. Caller on Canal Street says she has a squirrel resting on her electrical panel, and she is concerned it is sick. ACO notified, and found squirrel was asleep, not sick.

Friday, 10/8

9:37 a.m. Report of a school bus driving erratically. Officer advised.

11:06 a.m. 911 misdial from near the Community Health Center on Montague City Road. 911 open line, can just hear beeping.

Busy signal on call back. Address does not match any houses. Incident tile was showing multiple addresses, and landline icon was showing in the middle of the road. Unsure where call came from, officer checked the area, negative signs of distress.

2:50 p.m. Report of a minor two-car accident on Park Street.

9:39 p.m. Report of a blue SUV driving erratically on Turners Falls Road. Unable to locate.

Saturday, 10/9

9:57 a.m. 911 caller states that she was Facetimeing on the phone with her daughter and she witnessed a heated argument between her and her husband. The husband was being very aggressive, and has an active warrant. Officers advising male party resisting arrest. Male party detained.

10:24 a.m. Caller states that she came outside to her car this morning and found that someone had vandalized both outside mirrors on her car. Advised to come to the station for documentation; officers currently tied up on an arrest.

3:30 p.m. 911 misdial. Spoke with a party that stated she is cleaning a building on Avenue A and accidentally hit the button with her cart.

4:46 p.m. Randall Road caller reports her neighbor is having a party and there are cars parked in the road, and a dog is running around off leash and going into other people's yards. Officer advised that there was only one car parked on the side of the road, legally, and did not observe a dog running outside.

5:27 p.m. Caller from Fourth Street says that she witnessed suspicious activity earlier; a male with a beard wearing a red hat and red shoes with a bicycle appeared to be selling drugs at the above location. Male party was already gone when she called. Detective advised.

7:14 p.m. Report from Unity Park that a group of approximately eight kids at the park were acting inappropriately and swearing. Gone on arrival.

10:11 p.m. Suspicious vehicle driving around and now parked behind Mayhew Steel, just sitting there. The same vehicle was seen driving around yesterday. Gone on arrival.

Sunday, 10/10

12:51 a.m. Caller from Avenue A states he has a no-harassment order on his neighbor and she just started banging and knocking on his wall and slamming her door, which shakes his apartment while his family is trying to sleep. Officer could hear female in the apartment but she wouldn't answer the door.

1:08 a.m. Report of a white male attempting to get into vehicles in the area of K Street. Caller states as soon as he spotted her watching, he jumped on a bike and took off. Description is white male with black winter jacket with the hood up and dark pants on a white bike. Male took off heading away from Avenue A.

10:08 a.m. K Street caller states that he came outside this morning and found one of his car windows smashed out, two of the car doors open as well as the gas tank. He called back to say that he kept the title to the vehicle in the car, and just discovered that it was missing.

10:10 a.m. Larceny of a catalytic converter from a 15-passenger van on Third Street.

11:06 a.m. Avenue A caller says his neighbor has been banging on the walls of his apartment since midnight.

3:21 p.m. Person in the station reported a deceased cat in front of his house that is not his. Sergeant picked up the cat, and will keep it at the station in case the owner calls looking for it.

6:39 p.m. 911 misdial. Party stated he is biking and his phone is mounted to the bike and it keeps calling 911.

6:49 p.m. Report of a group of teenagers hanging out at the park; party says while she was walking her dog one of them threw a glass bottle towards her and it shattered in the parking lot. The person was described as wearing a red plaid shirt and ski mask. Officer advised that they can see the glass on the ground, but no one is around. They will take a drive around to see if they can find them.

7:28 p.m. Ripley Road noise complaint. Caller stated that it sounds like there is a party/event going on at the retreat center with a DJ, and requests to have an officer ask them to turn it down. Officer advised that there is a wedding at the above location and it will be over at 9 p.m. Officer advised them of the noise complaint. Received a second call that it is still loud. Dispatcher did advise the caller that the event will end at 9 p.m.

7:41 p.m. Federal Street caller reporting a noise complaint regarding her neighbor; he has been revving his engine all day and is still doing it. Officer advised he has been listening and has not heard anything so far; it has been quiet since he arrived. Two vehicles left the location, and one had a loud exhaust.

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The Children's Page

YONERDOD ILLUSTRATION



Halloween! Halloween! Halloween! The day to be the things you dream!
And everyone you see has treats, Parading through the dusky streets!
The only problem is to know- in which costume you should go.
A mummy, or a bright green witch? A fancy lady who is rich?
Spiderman or old scarecrow? Aliens or astronauts? Dracula, or a dog with spots?
There are many things to be, I know, But you must choose what your mom can sew!
Or maybe the handy one is your dad, who can make you a robot from old stuff he had!
Well good luck kids and have a ball! Happy Halloween to one and all!!
Love, Beverly Ketch and Hannah Brookman

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Learning to Fly Fish: Part XVII

Ariel Jones, who recently passed away, penned a series of 21 articles in the Montague Reporter in 2005 on her experiences learning to fly fish. Jones was a pioneer of the local art scene when she moved to Turners Falls from NYC and opened a photography studio on Avenue A in 2000.

By ARIEL JONES

MICHIGAN – We had fished the Mason Tract on the south branch of the AuSable, and Stephan Bridge and Burton Landing on the mainstream, with no luck. Some of the access banks were extremely mucky. Sinking into this stuff with heavy wet wading boots was spooky because it was hard to pull my boots back out of it, and the only place to step was deeper into the muck.

Fortunately, if I could get beyond the first five feet or so, the riverbed became more solid.

Randy would just step in and keep going, seemingly unconcerned with the difficulty. I, on the other hand, stood back in a knot of anxiety, not wanting to submit myself to this dark, suction-y goo. I did get more adept at dealing with this as we moved around the river, but still felt a sense of dread each time I faced it.

After fishing the mainstream, which was solid with small rocks, I had problems wading parts of the other sections. Deeper water, a very swift current, and an extremely uneven riverbed kept me constantly preoccupied with my footing. Wading on what seemed to be a sound sandy bottom, I would sometimes suddenly sink up to my waist with no warning. This was unsettling.

Twice I had to call out to Randy for help. The first time I was in water past my waist in a strong current and sinking in sand. I knew I would go over if I took another step and just braced my boot against a large rock until he could give me a hand, hoping I could maintain balance until he got there. Two men in a canoe lazily paddled by, smiled, and waved.

The second time I was struggling upstream around a bank and could go no further against the current. I held onto a little branch until Randy could get back that time.

My irritation with my own ineptness was mounting. Just as you can't blame the fish if you don't catch any, you can't blame the water if you are not good at wading it.

I had just experienced a fantastic July and early August of fishing at home, and was feeling a lot of confidence in my developing skills. Even through my frustration I still knew that the problem was me, not the AuSable.

I had begun to learn to fly fish on a very controlled river that was stocked with fish in the spring and again in the fall. The riverbed of the Swift is solid and predictable where I fish, and the current was very slow. I am in it past my waist only occasionally. And you can see the fish.

Fishing here was a whole different ball game. The AuSable has not been stocked in 20 years or so. These stream-born trout are wily and wary, and catch them or not, I was learning more about how, and how not, to fish. And about how very much I still had to learn.

And perhaps I should invest in a good wading staff.

That evening, tired and worn out from



The Manistee River.

philosophizing, I listened to an owl hooting nearby before falling asleep. I felt ready to go out again the next morning.

Wednesday morning we gulped down our coffee and hurried from camp. We fished the Upper Manistee at the 612 (Mancelona) Bridge, the CCC Bridge, and several places in between. The Manistee is easier to wade in, and as beautiful and clear as the AuSable. It was another gorgeous day and we had a great time, caught a few Brookies, and just enjoyed being in this lovely river.

Late in the morning we went to a local spot for breakfast. The television, mounted high on a back wall, was turned on to CNN and we learned that the city of New Orleans had been destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. It was hard to believe what we were

seeing, and to realize that this had been going on for over two days. Already the locals were grumbling about the slow response by FEMA and raising questions about economic status and who gets help.

One rough-looking guy turned to me and said, "Funny how much quicker they were in Florida."

Yes, "funny."

After deciding against drinking the worst cup of coffee I have ever tasted, we left and fished the rest of the day, and then packed up and began the three-hour drive south to Randy's. On the way we also discovered that the price of gas had risen by over \$1 a gallon.

Next: Back home on the Swift.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

A Happening at the Shea

TURNERS FALLS – *A Happening* is an immersive, interactive, living art installation taking place at the Shea Theater next Friday, October 22 at 7 p.m. This night of festivities will include live painting and music, craft vendors, immersive theater, and sound installations.

The event brings together artists from across mediums and across the Valley. Artists include Michelangelo Wescott, Joe Dulude II, Lori Holmes-Clark, Hannah Rosenbaum, Rosa Beryl, Justin Monet, Breanna King, Chad Browne-Springer, Kat Adler, Josh Ruder, Marina Goldman, Samuel Perry, Jack Golden, and Lindel Hart.

Said Perry, "During the shutdown last year, I created *SVIP*, an ambient musical endeavor with no genre boundaries, whose aim is to create an arresting atmosphere, transmute energy in a given space, and transport listeners to another world. As vaccines rolled out and shows became a reality again, I had an interesting dilemma: how could I best represent my music from *SVIP* in a live setting?"

Perry realized that in order to



allow listeners to truly be transported in the way he wanted them to be, a simple concert would not suffice. Thus, *A Happening* was born, an intersection of music, visual art, installation art, festival energy, immersive theater, and multimedia experimentation. "I've gathered artists from across mediums to create an unforgettable, immersive art experience unlike anything audiences have ever experienced before," said Perry.

Tickets are \$20 and available in advance at www.showclix.com/event/a-happening. Doors open at 6:30 p.m.

REVIEW

Classic Horror Series at the Garden

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – The new owner of the Garden Cinemas seems to like having on occasion movies that premiered in theaters a long time ago. The latest is a month-long monster movie marathon for October called "Monstober." Obviously, this is because October is the month we have Halloween.

The films being shown are classic horror movies, mostly made in the 1930s. A handful feature well-known characters out of horror, such as *The Wolf Man*, *The Invisible Man*, *Frankenstein*, and *Dracula*. I also know of the actors who played these characters in the films. Boris Karloff played Frankenstein's monster. Bela Lugosi played Dracula. I know of Lon Chaney, Jr. because I once saw the Phantom of the Opera made in 1925 with him playing the Phantom. But to my surprise, I also learn he played the Wolf Man in the movie starring that character.

Some of the titles I mentioned are just the perfect fit to have for movies in a monster movie marathon. I decided to go to one in particular and highlight it in this article. My choice was an Abbott and Costello movie. They were a comedy team that got to be very popular at one point, and ended up doing quite a lot of films. The one I saw was called *Abbott & Costello Meet Frankenstein* (1948). It featured of course Frankenstein, Dracula, the Wolf Man, and the Invisible Man. The movie is a real cornucopia of horror characters.

I was a little surprised, when I saw it, to find a small number of people in the audience. It's not that people don't enjoy old movies at the Garden. There just wasn't a big-time turnout the previous couple of times

I had been to those types of movies.

Also, I didn't really find Abbott & Costello to be terribly funny in this. But it was a little amusing to see Abbott scared silent from seeing Frankenstein's monster and Dracula walking past him. I also enjoyed seeing Lon Chaney's first Wolf Man appearance at the start of the movie, then seeing him turn into that on the screen.

I also enjoyed seeing Bela Lugosi transform from a bat into Dracula on screen. Here is a hint about Abbott and Costello, and how they get into this... Let's just say as package delivery men, they should be careful about what they open. I also found it amusing how Lon Chaney appears again in the film through a phone call that basically tells the duo they are in Dracula's castle. I should mention that the duo delivers these packages to one of those little shop of horror places, with wax figures.

They eventually meet up with the Wolf Man. His second transformation into that is cool, too. One more amusing moment is Abbott sitting in Frankenstein's lap when they are in the castle looking for Dracula. Costello eventually at least believes they are in the middle of something. This leads to scenes where they try to avoid Frankenstein's monster and the Wolf Man and Dracula in the castle.

I did find two scenes to be funny: the duo trying to get away with a boat tied to the dock, and then a brief cameo by the Invisible Man that makes them jump into the water. I had a lot to say about the movie. I understand why it was so popular when it originally premiered.

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MEMORIAL



Christine M. Parzych, age 56, passed away on Sunday morning, October 10, 2021. She led a very full life. She loved and was loved by all. We were all so fortunate and grateful for having her during the time she was here on this Earth. She had a shining light in her eyes, and a big heart. Christy will be sorely missed.

Services are private, under the direction of Walker Funeral Home, 14 High Street, Greenfield. At her brother Joseph's request, *in lieu* of flowers and cards, please consider making a donation to Pathlight (in care of Christine M. Parzych), 101 Munson St., Greenfield, MA 01301. Thank you.

The Red-Carpet Treatment



ANNE JEMAS PHOTO

Last Saturday the Shea Theater hosted the local premiere of *The Secret of Sinchanee*, a feature-length thriller shot largely on location in Turners Falls and Erving. Above, moviegoers throng outside the theater.

SWAMP from page B1

an exhibition held on the waters of the oxbow itself. [Editors' note: Kohlmann is a columnist and layout assistant at the Reporter.]

The exhibition, which ran from October 8 to 10, required borrowing a canoe to paddle out on the oxbow's northwest basin. The art was installed on the basin's banks as well as on logs. Some works even rose out of the mucky water itself.

Arriving at the launch site just off Route 5, my wife, two young children and I piled into a tippy canoe with exhibition checklists in hand instead of fishing poles. As we put in on a muddy piece of land, cars could be heard zooming by, electrical wires seen through the trees. The fall foliage was just beginning to turn. The water was skimmed with bright green algae. Tangles of swamp grass clung to our paddles as we made our way out into the water.

As we approached the art, we had to keep reminding the children, restless and craning to see, not to both move to one side of the boat at the same time or we'd all fall in. "Pick your favorites," I told them, a game we often play when visiting exhibitions.

We made our way around the basin in a counterclockwise direction. It quickly became clear that the best work in the exhibition either was integrated into the landscape, commented on it formally or through its subject matter, or did both.

One of the first pieces we came across was Dylan Kraus's small painting *Goethe's Sailboat in the Swamp*. It rose unexpectedly up out of the water, bobbing gently on the current as we glided by.

Not far beyond, Estafainia Puerta's *Memoria Eco (Echo Memory)* sat on a fallen tree jutting from the bank. It looked like two ghostly white, sea-shell shaped flowers, their shared stem arching above them, sprouting centipede-like creatures.

Aidan Koch's *Chair for Small Mammal* rose unobtrusively from a mossy knoll. As titled, its tulle- and horsehair-covered surface would have made a fitting throne for one of the squirrels darting along the riverbanks.

Koch's sculpture was almost upstaged by the natural environment itself with the appearance of a remarkably large skeleton nearby that we took to be the remains of a fish.

Kohlmann later explained that it was likely the remains of a river otter, which are not uncommon on the oxbow.

She also said that she saw bald eagles in the area, although we weren't so fortunate.

We did see a massive owl overhead, not real but depicted in Emma Kohlmann's painting *Deep Red Barn Owl*. Kohlmann, the curator's sister, had rigged her large, semi-abstract piece so that it hung from a tree. Suspended some twenty feet in the air, it swung gently in the breeze. My son declared it his favorite, and we all agreed that it was a show highlight.

Two other paintings were equally well-integrated into the landscape. Brook Hsu's *Sound Near the Fountain* floated on the surface of the swamp, its washy green imagery slowly getting covered with a verdant layer of algae. *Who is Swampy?*, by Barry Elkanick, is a small abstract painting with ruddy umber and muted aqua shapes, set in a burnt cherry wood frame that perfectly complemented the erumpent tree stump on which it was mounted.

My daughter's favorite piece in the exhibition was Claire Christerson's *Sand Playground*, a ceramic sandcastle on a floating log with sculpted snails crawling across its surface. She especially liked the undersized black cat creeping along the castle's outer wall.

Esther Clark's *Remembering Places (Remembering Dreams)* was yet another ceramic work mounted on a floating log, although this piece stood in studied contrast to its surroundings. Shaped like an oblong vessel with pastel-colored, room-like dioramas carved into its sides, it looked like a model post-modern house crossed with a lunar lander.

One of the final pieces we saw before we made our return to shore, and a highlight of the show, was Nick Sethi's *Untitled*, a large digital print on a vinyl banner that was hung from an overhead wire so that its bottom edge kissed the water. It cut off a corner of the swamp facing the road so that power lines could be seen behind it.

The image appears to be a photograph of the corner of an old-ruined building in another forest or swamp somewhere, perhaps inhabited by some dropout from society. The bricks of the building are painted bright,



Nick Sethi, *Untitled*, digital print on vinyl.

acidic green, as are a tangle of roots winding up its side. A plastic shower curtain with grey printed branches serves as a makeshift door. Other primitive household items are strewn in the margins.

In Sethi's image, as in the Swamp Show as a whole, nature and culture are hopelessly entangled. The form and content of the work in the exhibition is far less elevated than that of Cole or the other great 19th century landscape painters. To put artwork directly in this landscape was an illuminating move. It was, after all, humans who have transformed this landscape into what it is today.

Rather than take the high view, the Swamp Show and the artists in it neither chastised nor celebrated this situation. Instead, Kohlmann's exhibition struck a sensitive balance that was bold enough to incorporate nature and humanity's impact on nature in playful ways.

To have spent an hour or so paddling through the remnants of the oxbow with accompanying artworks as our guide was a pleasure that reminded me and my family of the impact that humans have on even our most cherished landscapes. The works in the show called attention to how there is still natural wonder to be found in such landscapes, even after these landscapes have been so irrevocably transformed.



Life Dances On, a painting by the artist "Swampy."

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14
Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Samirah Evans & Her Handsome Devils*. \$ 7 p.m.
Gateway City Arts, Holyoke: *Lucero, Morgan Wade*. \$ 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 15
10 Forward, Greenfield: *Dieci F: An Evening of Italian Wine, Film, and Music* featuring wine tastings, DJ MentalDrift, and a screening of Fellini's *I Clowns* (1970). \$ 8 p.m., film at 8 p.m.
Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Mark Erelli, Mary-Elaine Jenkins*. \$ 7 p.m.
Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *Danny Hescocock, Jr.* Free. 7 p.m.
Stone Church, Brattleboro: *The Gaslight Tinkers*. \$ 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16
Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Steve Forbert*. \$ 7 p.m.
Mount Toby Friends Meeting-

house, Leverett: *Ordinary Elephant*. \$ 7:30 p.m.
Calvin Theater, Northampton: *Ben Folds*. \$ 8 p.m.
Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Dead Man's Waltz*. Grateful Dead, Allman Brothers, The Band tribute. \$ 8 p.m.
MASS MoCA, North Adams: *Michael Olatuja*. \$ 8 p.m.
The Wheelhouse, Greenfield: *BagBoyJay, Chris Focus, Delgado the Don, 22BB*. \$ 10 p.m.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 17
Gateway City Arts, Holyoke: *Bill Frisell Trio*. \$ 8 p.m.
Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Caroline Rose, Joanna Sternberg*. \$ 8 p.m.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 19
Academy of Music, Northampton: *Patty Griffin, Gregory Alan Isakov*. \$ 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 21
Iron Horse Music Hall, Northampton: *Robyn Hitchcock*.

\$ 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 22
Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Eggtooth Productions Presents: A Happening*. "Multi-leveled immersive experience." \$ 7 p.m.
Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Robbie Fulks*. \$ 7 p.m.
Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *Annie Hart*, analog synthesizers. Closing reception for *Luminous Bloom* exhibit. \$ 7 p.m.
Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Will Wood, Matt Pless*. \$ 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23
Downtown Turners Falls: Great Falls Festival feat. *No Lens, Duh Band, Curly Fingers Dupree, AfterGlo, Fortified Blues Band, Tracy and the Valley Revival*, and more. Free. 12 p.m.
Between the Uprights, Turners Falls: *Rock 201*. Free and outdoors. 4 p.m.
Palladium, Worcester: *The Front Bottoms, Oso Oso, Sydney*

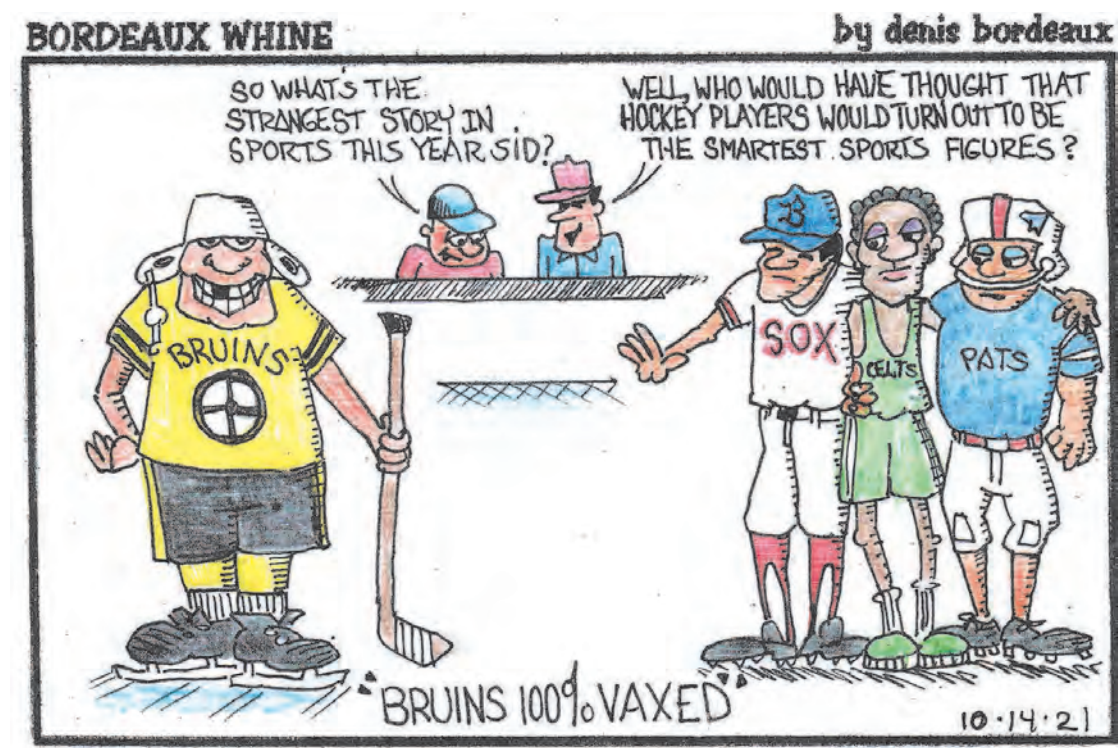
Sprague. \$ 7 p.m.
The Perch at Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Cloudbelly*. \$ 7 p.m.
Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Brown Eyed Women*. All-female Grateful Dead tribute. \$ 7:30 p.m.
Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Soule Monde*. \$ 8 p.m.
10 Forward, Greenfield: *Kal-bells, Ruth Garbus*. \$ 8 p.m.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 24
Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Unholy Roller*, skatepark benefit, feat. *Strange Fate, Eat Fire Spring, Boyfriend Machine, and Rocking Puppies*. \$ 8 p.m. Skate jam at 12 p.m., contests, vendors; music at 5 p.m.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 26
Majestic Saloon, Northampton: Screening, *Little Shop of Horrors* (1986) and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (1975). 8 p.m.
Gateway City Arts, Holyoke: *WAVVES, Harmless*. \$ 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 28
Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Skeleton Crew Theater Family Friendly Halloween Show*. \$ 4, 6, and 8 p.m.
Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Jake Manzi*, CD release show, with *Chris Marlon Jennings*. \$ 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 29
Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Skeleton Crew Theater Family Friendly Halloween Show*. \$ 4, 6, and 8 p.m.
Palladium, Worcester: *Gwar, Napalm Death, Eyehategod*. \$ 7 p.m.
Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Mary Gauthier, Jaimee Harris*. \$ 7 p.m.
Bombyx Center, Northampton: *Dee Dee Bridgewater, Bill Charlap*. \$ 8 p.m.
Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Start Making Sense*, Talking Heads tribute, with *Rice: An American Band*. \$ 8 p.m.



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Cool Cats on the Ave

by Juyeth

The humans think we want to celebrate our birthday.

They say we are "senior" cats now.

They do know that after 11 years a plate of tuna and a comfy spot...

... is our kind of a good time. And maybe a little squirrel chasing.

OVER THE HILL

Carolyn Clark

You know, Harry, we Americans all agree on what we want, regardless of party affiliation.

Un huh.

Like child care, affordable health insurance, good roads and bridges, low drug costs...

Un huh.

So how can just two senators bring everything to a dead stop?!

Hmm...

At times like these, the wheels of government grind exceedingly slowly.

or not at all.

Three Degrees of Warming

By Janice Rowan

We could try the Homo sapien elimination diet...

Are there any side effects?

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HEARTFELT from page B1

after moving to Greenfield. A recipe for autumn olive ketchup from herbalist Dina Falconi’s book *Foraging and Feasting* caught my eye. Since I love to try new recipes, especially if it involves foraging or using never-before-tried ingredients, I decided to give it a try.

I scouted around and realized that I’d been driving past rows of the bushes for years on my way to and from Amherst. They were all along Route 116 and, once identified, I began to notice them everywhere.

The grouping I’d found was easily accessible from the road and I plotted my day of picking, returning on a weekend, and returning home dirty, disheveled, and pleased with my nearly 12-pound harvest. It took me two days to process them all – I’ve since sped up the process – and I made jars and jars of autumn olive ketchup that first year.

When I started, I picked the berries bare-handed, but over the years I learned to wear gloves which enabled me to run my hand from top to bottom of a branch, directing handfuls of berries (and leaves and branches) right into my bucket. Once home, I pick out the larger branches, remove berries still clinging to stems, and fill the bucket with a slow flow of water so the leaves float to the top and can be scooped out. I occasionally stir up the berries to release leaves and stems from the bottom and when I’m sure it’s clean, I put the berries into a large pot with a small amount of water and heat and stir until mushy.

After a brisk turn of the berries and liquid in the food mill, I’m left with a bowl of red purée, which I set aside. With its velvety texture and stunning bright crimson red color, it would do well as a condiment at a vampire’s banquet.

I sauté onions and add in the same spices found in tomato ketchup including cinnamon, cumin, coriander, and paprika. Adding in

the berry juice and cooking for five minutes, I then add vinegar and maple syrup and set the pot to simmer for about 90 minutes until it’s thick, stirring occasionally to prevent sticking and to get the bits up off the bottom. It won’t be as thick as ketchup... yet... but will thicken as it cools.

A final taste towards the end of cooking and I might add a bit more salt or more maple syrup. Every batch I’ve made tastes different just as every bush has different tasting berries; some sweeter, others tarter. This year’s berries were magnificently plump, and the three or so pounds I picked today made five and a half pints of ketchup.

I can the ketchup in a hot water bath, label it, and store it in my cellar to be given out later as gifts since it’s such a unique condiment. It is very piquant and tart, more like cocktail sauce, with a flavor unlike any commercial condiment; it’s great on french fries or shrimp cocktail. I keep a jar or two in the fridge, often many years old as the flavor intensifies with age.

But these beauties have more potential than being cooked down into a savory sauce. They can be added to baked goods, and even though they have seeds, they are similar to a pomegranate or raspberry seed in that they can be eaten along with the fruit.

The berries can be cooked down with sugar or honey and a squeeze of citrus juice to make a compote, which can be used as a ribboned filling inside of a cinnamon coffee cake or added to banana muffins. Think of them as a substitute for raspberries, although they may need a bit more sweetener to combat the tartness.

Autumn olives also make really great fruit leather. Especially delectable is the sweet/tart combination perfect for this dried treat. I cook them down, run them through the food mill, add some honey and lime juice, then pour them onto

AUTUMN OLIVE KETCHUP

- 3 to 4 lb. autumn olives
- ½ cup olive oil
- 3 large onions, finely chopped
- 3 Tbsp. minced garlic
- ½ tsp. each: ground black pepper, nutmeg, clove, and cinnamon
- 1 tsp. each: ground coriander and cumin
- 2 tsp. ground ginger
- 1 Tbsp. paprika
- 2 to 3 Tbsp. sea salt, to taste
- 1½ cups organic apple cider vinegar
- 1½ cups maple syrup

After you’ve cleaned the berries, put them in a large pot or Dutch oven with a half cup of water and cook over medium heat until they soften. Put them through a food mill or mesh strainer to remove the seeds, and set the purée aside. Remember to dispose of the seeds where they won’t propagate.

Next, heat the oil on medium and sauté the onions, adding in garlic, spices, and salt once the onions are translucent. Cook for two minutes, then add berry purée and cook for another five. Finally, pour in vinegar and maple syrup and simmer for 60 to 90 minutes, stirring often so it doesn’t stick to the bottom. Taste and add more salt or sweetener as needed. You may purée it, as I do, or strain it, which will give you a very silky purée but will greatly reduce the amount of ketchup, and I don’t like to lose a drop.

Since it’s likely you won’t be eating all the ketchup you made quickly, can them in jars to preserve. To can in hot water, bring a big pot up to a brisk boil with enough water to cover the submerged jars with at least an inch of water. I put my empty jars and lids right in the pot as it comes to a boil to sterilize them, but you can also run them through your dishwasher. (I generally use the small jelly quarter-pint jars or half-pint jars.)

Fill the jars with the ketchup, making sure to leave half an inch of space at the top. Before loosely screwing on a lid, make sure the rim of each jar is wiped spotless; you don’t want any bacteria to be able to



MANDESON PHOTO

Jars of autumn olive ketchup are a stunning crimson.

get in under the lid.

Lower the jars into boiling water, cover and set a timer for 15 minutes. Remove and allow to cool for 24 hours. Some lids will seal, others will pop within minutes of their removal. Check that all lids are sealed. You can tell that they are sealed when the middle bump is concave. If it’s still got a bump in the middle, push down on it with your finger. If it just won’t seal, you can re-boil the jar, but check that the rim is clean when you seal the lid.

Let the jars cool, then store them on a shelf or, once opened, keep them in the refrigerator. Let the ketchup sit for at least a few weeks to meld and thicken. It will last for years in your refrigerator, and just gets better with age. Enjoy!

special sheets in my electric dehydrator. Unfortunately, they did not last long as my wife found they were her new favorite food, and that was the end of that; I could not keep them in the pantry for more than a day or two. It was a lot of

work for a small payoff, but fun as an occasional treat.

I leave you with Falconi’s Autumn Olive Ketchup recipe. I hope you’ll give it a try, as you can still find the berries around the Valley for just a bit longer.

Trouble lives in Greenfield with Wifey and Mama Catt Elliott and volunteers at many local agencies working with food insecure populations. She loves to talk, read, write, garden/farm, cook, and make art.



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